



Coventry City Council

Job Description

Job Title:	Benefits Officer	Job Number:	
Service:	Revenues and Benefits	Post Number:	Various
Location:	One Friargate	Grade:	4

Our values:

We expect everyone who works for us to be committed to our One Coventry values and to share our commitment to becoming a more diverse and inclusive organisation.

Job Purpose:

1. To administer all claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
2. To provide a front-line service to all claimants or their representatives by responding to their needs by providing a face to face service, and also by telephone or in writing.

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Process all benefit claims, including students, war pensioners/widows, joint tenants, second adult rebate and the self-employed, by:
 - (a) Ensuring that claim forms are completed fully and accurately, and all information has been received in accordance with the appropriate benefit legislation.
 - (b) Calculating entitlement, including taking into account any application for benefit to be backdated, ensure that payments are made in line with the appropriate benefits legislation and that the appropriate decision letter is sent. The calculation will be undertaken either by using the on-line computer system or manually.
 - (c) Calculating overpayments for both benefits, ensuring that the appropriate decision letter is sent and that the first stage of recovery action is taken. This will include the following:
 - Deduction from on-going benefit.
 - Recovery from the Council Tax account.
 - Passing debt to the Overpayment Recovery Team for action.
 - (d) Dealing with all changes of circumstances and ensure that the Benefit Record is amended as appropriate, the correct decision letter is sent and that any actions to pay or recover benefit are undertaken.
 - (e) Updating the benefit claim via the on-line computer system and other computerised records relating to the benefit claim.

2. Provide an effective and efficient customer service in line with the Council's Customer Care Policies by:
 - (a) Dealing with enquiries from claimants or their representatives, either by personal interview, by telephone or in writing.
 - (b) Corresponding with benefit claimants, Job Centre Plus, the Department of Work and Pensions, employers, registered social landlords, hostels, private landlords, the Council Tax Section and any other organisations to obtain information required to assess benefit.
 - (c) Providing general advice and guidance on other welfare benefits and referring more complex cases to the Benefits Advice Line.
3. Respond to all enquiries from registered social landlords and hostel providers either in person or in writing in order to assist them in their dealings with their tenants.
4. Liaise with the Fraud Team and refer any cases where there is a possibility of benefit being claimed fraudulently.
6. Promote efficient and effective team working by mentoring other members of staff when requested, assisting with on the job training and giving advice and guidance.
7. Provide any required statistics or management information to enable the efficient running of the service.
8. Any other duties and responsibilities within the range of the salary grade.

The post holder must comply with Coventry City Council's health and safety policy and in particular is required:-

- To take reasonable care for their own health and safety at work and of those who may be affected by their actions or by their omissions
- To cooperate with their line manager and senior management, to work safely, to comply with health and safety instructions and information and undertake appropriate health and safety training as required
- Not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare
- To report to their manager any health and safety concerns, hazardous condition or defect in the health and safety arrangements.

Any further Health and Safety responsibilities relevant to this post will be set out in the offer letter and Written Statement of Particulars

The post holder must comply with the Interagency procedures of the Safeguarding Boards and Coventry City Council's policies for safeguarding children and safeguarding adults and in particular is required:-

- To ensure they are aware of the signs that may suggest a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected
- To report to their manager, or other appropriate manager, any concerns they may have that suggest that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused or neglected immediately

Any further Safeguarding Board responsibilities relevant to this post will be set out in the offer letter and Written Statement of Particulars

Post holders will be accountable for carrying out all duties and responsibilities with due regard to the City Council's Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Duties which include processing of any personal data must be undertaken within the corporate data protection guidelines.

Responsible for: None

Responsible to: Team Manager

Date Reviewed: January 2018

Updated: March 2021



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Person Specification

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Location:	One Friargate	Grade:	4

Area	Description
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Knowledge:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge of Housing and Council Tax Benefits.• Awareness of other Welfare Benefits• Awareness of the need for confidentiality.
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Skills and Abilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excellent Customer Service Skills to deal with customers on a face-to-face basis and over the telephone in accordance the corporate standard.• Verbal skills to respond in an appropriate manner, face to face, and over the telephone or in the customers home to enquiries from the general public.• Written skills to respond to complex enquires from the customer and outside agencies.• Numeracy skills to assess Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Working Tax Credit using an on line system.• Ability to respond effectively to difficult interviews e.g. tactfully dealing with customers emotionally upset, defining situation when dealing with violent/abusive customers.• Key board skills for data input and retrieval and for sending and receiving e mails.• Organisational skills to prioritise own workloads.
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Experience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Previous experience of dealing with the public in a service delivery environment.• Previous experience of working as part of a team.
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Educational:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Numeracy and literacy skills•
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Special Requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. A Criminal Record Disclosure will be required prior to appointment. <p>Registration to the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) Employee Authentication System (if required). This will involve the completion of a character declaration and confidentiality agreement.</p> <p>A declaration of interest form will be required to be completed annually.</p>
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